In commemoration of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, which is aimed at increasing knowledge about DV, heightening responses to those survivors who have already been impacted by violence, and preventing future acts of domestic violence, this issue focuses on the network of institutions that has arguably the greatest potential for delivering a lasting impact on our communities – the courts.

Among the four disciplines – law enforcement, prosecution, courts, and victim services – to which funds must be allocated under the STOP Formula Grants program, the percentage that is required to be spent on court responses is the smallest. With five percent of a state’s or territory’s grant available for this sector (unless some or all of a jurisdiction’s discretionary funds are also devoted to courts), STOP planning teams must be particularly strategic in their development of goals and objectives that are aimed at improving the ways that courts handle domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking cases; design and structuring of programs directed at courts; and decision-making about which grant applicants to fund for maximum effect.

Courts are the final arm of the criminal justice system to have direct contact with a case prior to its disposition. However, the way that a court approaches cases of domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking can have the greatest impact – not only on individual victims and offenders, but also on entire communities that fall within its jurisdiction.

Courts set the tone for how a community views the seriousness of domestic and family violence. Every aspect of the way in which a court operates—including accessibility in terms of location, building structure, and processes for all survivors including Limited English Proficient individuals, the Deaf/Hard of Hearing community, culturally-specific communities, and persons living with physical, mental health, or cognitive disabilities; court operations including staffing structures and job duties of clerks and other court employees; safety and security measures; the scheduling and coordinating of cases; policies and procedures for adjudicating cases; training for judges and court staff; and the courtroom demeanor of judges and hearing officers – sends a message to the community about how domestic violence is viewed by the judicial system.

In this issue of Administrators’ Corner, we explore various ways that court responses can be adjusted to better respond to the needs of victims and curtail offender criminal behavior. The first article focuses on responses that the judicial systems in four different jurisdictions have developed to send the message that domestic violence will be taken seriously. The article examines the STOP-funded statewide efforts of Florida, as well as the case streamlining approaches taken by the 6th Judicial Circuit in the state; the judicial-based Family Violence Coordinating Councils located in every judicial circuit in Illinois, which are headed by a state-level coordinating body; the offender monitoring-focused courts in Brooklyn, New York, that include an Integrated Domestic Violence Court system and a Felony DV Court; and West Virginia’s specialized DV court in Kanawha County, training for judges, and a geomapping application.

ALSO has often heard from STOP administrators that one of the most challenging aspects about planning for the use of STOP funds is deciding how to use the court allocation. With this in mind, the Center for Court Innovation offers ideas for low- or no-additional-cost measures that courts can take to change the way that they are handling domestic violence cases.

The information provided by the Muskie School, which is drawn from subgrantee reports, provides information about the variety of ways in which STOP administrators are using their STOP court funds.

Many STOP administrators participated in the 2010 National Leadership Summit on State Court Responses to Domestic Violence, which focused on
This project was supported by Grant No. 2007-TA-AX-K040 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

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**Important Information from the STOP Unit**

You should have recently received a letter, dated September 28, from Michelle Brickley, Associate Director of the Office on Violence Against Women that provides a clarification on the allocation process of STOP funds within a state or territory. The text of that letter is reproduced below.

September 28, 2012

Greetings STOP Administrators:

The purpose of this letter is to provide you clarification and guidance on the allocation process for STOP funds. The STOP statute requires that the designated allocation for each discipline (law
enforcement, courts, prosecution, and victims services) be taken from the total award amount. It has recently been brought to OVW’s attention that States and Territories have not taken these amounts from the total award amount but rather from the total amount awarded less administrative funds.

We recognize the importance of both the administrative funds and the amount of funds available to be used at the discretion of States and Territories. Therefore, we have a solution that would address these needs, while also ensuring adherence to the STOP statute: states may allocate up to 10 percent of each of the other STOP allocations to be used for administration of the STOP grant. An example of the solution is as follows:

STOP award $1,000,000
▶ 5% or $50,000 for Courts; of this amount up to $5,000 can be used for administration
▶ 25% or $250,000 for Law Enforcement; of this amount up to $25,000 for administration
▶ 25% or $250,000 for Prosecution; of this amount up to $25,000 for administration
▶ 30% or $300,000 for Victim Services; of this amount up to $30,000 for administration
▶ 15% or $150,000 at the State’s discretion; of this amount up to $15,000 for administration

This solution gives States and Territories the same amount of funds to meet the administrative cost and discretionary needs, but also complies with the statute because each discipline would receive the allocation amount calculated on the total amount awarded.

If you have any questions regarding this, please feel free to contact your OVW Program Specialist.

Michelle Brickley, Associate Director
Office on Violence Against Women

Spotlight on Oklahoma Domestic Violence Awareness Month Activities

For Domestic Violence Awareness Month 2012, the State of Oklahoma has planned several events. The activities are described below. Many thanks to Tara Roberson-Moore at the Oklahoma District Attorneys Council, Federal Grants Division, for sharing this information for inclusion in AC!

➤ The District Attorneys Council, the Office of Attorney General (OAG), and the Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (OCADVSA) are hosting the 5th Annual Excellence in Action Awards Ceremony and Press Conference at the State Capitol. The ceremony recognizes a law enforcement officer, a prosecutor, a victim advocate, and a volunteer that have shown true excellence in their work to assist victims of domestic violence. The award nominees are selected by their peers in the field.

➤ OCADVSA will take the Silent Witness Initiative to 30 communities and will assist all of the local victim service agencies in the state with their local activities.

➤ Capitol Lighting Ceremony hosted by the OAG and YWCA – Oklahoma City.

➤ As a result of a new partnership between the OCADVSA and the Department of Human Services DV Task Force, domestic violence awareness materials will be distributed to every DHS office in the state system. The materials include information for employees as well as customers/clients.

The 2012 Annual Excellence in Action award recipients are listed below, along with descriptions of their work:
Law Enforcement Officer: Lori Chipps-Bray, McCurtain County Sheriff’s Office, Idabel

Lori Chipps-Bray simply works for the good of the domestic violence victims in her jurisdiction, and has for several years. Regardless of the volatility of the individual situation, Capt. Chipps-Bray keeps her composure, listens intently to victims, and gathers all the evidence she needs to not only find and arrest the perpetrator, but also assist the district attorney’s office in getting convictions. She collaborates with victim advocates, other law enforcement agencies, and the district attorney’s office to hold perpetrators in her jurisdiction accountable for their actions. Her eagerness to address domestic violence in her community has resulted in agency-wide policies regarding domestic violence cases and the way they are handled. If a case is not handled properly, she addresses it immediately. Every domestic violence case the McCurtain County Sheriff’s Office responds to is sent to the district attorney for review and possible prosecution. There are very few law enforcement agencies in Oklahoma that can report that they do the same. It is something the McCurtain County Sheriff’s Office is very proud of and encourages in other agencies. Lori has fought the battle for victims to be heard in Southeast Oklahoma and it is because of her diligence and dedication that they have a voice.

Prosecutor: Meredith Stangon, Assistant District Attorney, District 14, Tulsa County

Meredith Stanton understands that domestic violence cases are different from other criminal cases because of the intimate relationship between the defendant and the victim. She knows these cases involve complex and frightening choices for victims that are sometimes life-threatening and always life-changing. While the typical outcome of domestic violence cases are plea deals, Meredith is not afraid to take cases to trial. Shortly after taking her current position, she was contacted by a colleague who had recently resigned. The call was about a trial scheduled for the very next day. Meredith did not attempt to obtain a continuance or a new date for the case. She prepared for the case and tried it herself — without the victim. She secured a conviction, a nine-month jail term, and a $2,500 fine. Meredith also knows and understands the power of collaboration and meets weekly with partners from the Family Safety Center and the Tulsa Police Family Violence Unit to staff cases and resolve issues. She displays a compassionate, firm, and fair approach that encourages victims to stay engaged with the prosecution and hold their perpetrators accountable.

Victim Advocate: Sara Palmer, Victim Advocate, District Attorney District 8, Newkirk

Sara Palmer’s service to victims doesn’t stop when the doors of the courthouse are locked at 5 p.m. She works diligently day after day and at all hours to ensure that the victims she works with are informed and that their interests are known and protected at all times. A perfect example of this was a case in which she assisted a battered woman with diminished capacity through the maze of the legal system. The defendant in the case made a habit of seeking mentally-impaired, older women to manipulate, control, and abuse. Sara empowered all of the victims in the case by educating them on the patterns in this man’s life and encouraging them to use the resources in the community that were available to assist them. Her time and care helped the victims in the case not only gain self-respect and an understanding of their situation, it empowered them to follow through with the prosecution of their abuser and ultimately hold him accountable for his actions.

Volunteer: Edith King, Safenet Services, Claremore

Every Tuesday, Edith Kay, a retired surgical nurse, attends protective order hearings to provide advocacy to victims who have no one else to attend court with them. She has done this faithfully for the past five years. She recently sat with a young physically-challenged man who had suffered abuse and was scared of what might happen in court. After a few minutes with Edith, he was laughing and relaxed by the time the hearing started. Edith truly has a gift in assessing and sensing whether it’s a smile, a listening ear, or a funny story that a victim needs to ease the stress of a court appearance. Whether it is a young mother with small babies, an older woman with grown children, or a young man afraid to face his attacker, Edith is there for support.
Historically, some courts have expressed concerns that receiving VAWA funds or participating in domestic violence coordinating teams might affect the perception of impartiality. This view has been widely debunked as most see the funds as integral to the fair administration of justice. Examples of this kind of programming include court education programs and tools to assist judges and court staff in fairly and efficiently handling matters such as protection order cases or firearms removals.

The changes that courts have made over the past 18 years have often been accomplished with the support of STOP funds, but have also relied upon a range of other resources, community collaborations, and partnerships, as you will read below. The court systems that are highlighted in this article describe different approaches to how courts can approach domestic violence cases and take an active role in keeping victims safe and holding offenders accountable:

- In Florida, products developed by the Office of Court Improvement, and the 6th Judicial Circuit’s streamlining of civil and criminal court processes;
- The creation of 28 judiciary-based family violence coordinating councils covering all 102 counties in Illinois;
- Brooklyn, New York’s multiple domestic violence court systems that have jurisdiction over misdemeanor crimes, felonies, or both civil and criminal cases; and
- West Virginia’s targeted docketing pilot domestic violence court in Kanawha County, judicial training, protective order registry, and geomapping application.

**FLORIDA**

Office of Court Improvement Initiatives

The Office of Court Improvement (OCI) in Florida has produced a series of products with STOP funds. [www.flcourts.org/gen_public/family/dv_main.shtml](http://www.flcourts.org/gen_public/family/dv_main.shtml)
These include:

▶ Videos that explain the process for obtaining an injunction for protection, attending a hearing on an injunction for protection and obtaining an injunction that protects a child from abuse (in contrast to an intimate partner abuse situation). www.flcourts.org/gen_public/family/dv_videos.shtml.
▶ Standard forms related to obtaining protection orders.
▶ A bench book for judges.

In addition to offering training programs statewide, OCI has created two virtual court programs that allow users to experience the domestic violence process from the viewpoint of a judge or a case manager. They also provide staff assistance to local and statewide committees, bringing the viewpoints of the courts to the table.

This office has produced a “Model Batterer Compliance Program in Domestic Violence Cases” to assist the courts in more effectively monitoring abuser adherence to orders where the court has mandated batterer intervention program attendance. The OCI piloted this proposed model in three judicial circuits. The pilot had data from one circuit, and concluded, among other things, how important it is for the courts to coordinate with the local BIPs when seeking to monitor court order compliance.

Sixth Judicial Circuit - Judge Lynn Tepper

Key Features

The domestic violence focus within the Sixth Judicial Circuit is best characterized as comprehensive and coordinated. The Sixth Circuit covers Pinellas and Pasco Counties in west central Florida. Over the past two decades, Judge Tepper has worked in this area to streamline court processes and provide help to families regardless of whether the case appears in family, dependency, or criminal court.

In that circuit, Judge Tepper promotes and uses a set of “Guiding Principles for Defining and Implementing a Unified Family Court,” taken from a 2001 Florida Supreme Court Opinion, to shape how the court handles domestic violence cases. One in particular is fundamental in the handling of domestic violence matters:

Cases involving inter-related family law issues should be consolidated or coordinated to maximize use of court resources to avoid conflicting decisions and to minimize inconvenience to the families.²

This court has developed a variety of individualized and targeted forms and specific instructions for judges on how to handle key aspects of the protection order process. For instance, How to Proactively Monitor and Enforce Compliance with DVI Orders offers a road map to the court and could be a useful tool for others to adapt to their local jurisdiction.

Accompanying instructions assist the court and staff on how best to use the forms and the affidavits to get all the information that is needed to issue and monitor compliance with orders safely and effectively. The court also offers a DVD that provides prospective court participants with information about the protection order process. The DVD is available for review within the secluded DV section of the Dade City [eastern Pasco County] Clerk’s Office. It has also been distributed to and made available to the clients of the local Legal Aid Office and DV Shelter.

Monitoring and Enforcement

The Order to Appear is issued by the court so that it can monitor compliance with its orders. This order puts the onus on the respondent to file proof of compliance with the court orders, rather than forcing the court to search for proof of compliance. If the respondent files proof of compliance, such

² In re Report of Steering Committee, 794 So. 2d 518 (Fla. 2001).
as payment of child support and attendance at the local Batterers Intervention Program, the court may excuse the respondent from appearing at a hearing. This form makes it clear, therefore, that the court is keeping a close eye on the case. There is also a specific *Order to Appear (medications)* form that is tailored to respondents who are required to take medication - for instance, as part of maintaining their mental health. In these cases, the court requires proof from a pharmacy that the respondent has been obtaining the medication, as ordered.

The *Affidavit and Motion for Order to Show Cause* and an *Order to Show Cause* (for indirect criminal contempt) helps to speed along violations with an easy-to-understand affidavit that the petitioner can fill out and that describes how the respondent violated it. The Order sets out the terms of the injunction with which the court has (on its own case review) found that the respondent has failed to comply. There are other orders that deal with issuing an arrest warrant.

A “*Related Case*” form directs the clerk to pull cases involving a family together, so that if, for example, child support is ordered under an injunction for protection, the judge hearing the dissolution will have that file at hand and be able to take it into consideration.

The “*Domestic Violence Worksheet*” is a one-page tool for the court to see, at a glance, the terms of the injunction. The worksheet has check-off spaces to make it easy and straightforward for the court to monitor compliance.

Judge Tepper also has a *DOR Form Letter* to send to the State’s Child Support enforcement agency, the Department of Revenue (DOR), to inform the DOR if she has made changes to court-ordered child support. This makes it easier for the parties and the enforcement agency to have clear and consistent court orders and information. It also alerts DOR that a previously unserved respondent has been located and served in the DV case.

Also regarding children, there is a form for the court to issue in conjunction with the final order that provides for *Supervised Parenting or Monitored Exchange*. This order allows for crucial details regarding supervised visitation and prompts the court to detail the time, place, and manner of visitation. Very importantly, it outlines the kind of danger the respondent may pose to the other parent and child and the reasons that the danger might exist – for example, the parent’s history of stalking and substance abuse. The court can also indicate whether it believes that the child may be, for instance, at risk of sexual abuse or kidnapping. This gives the supervised visitation program insight and information so that it can most effectively monitor the visitation.

Finally, there is a specific form, *Order on Affidavit in Support of Violation of Injunction*, which the court can use to forward an injunction violation to the State Attorney for enforcement and prosecution. Once more, this form is ready-made, and in a check-off format, to help the court to expedite enforcement of its orders and injunction violations. There is also the option for the court to act quickly to appoint the State Attorney if it finds that there is immediate danger of violence to the petitioner, the children or any other person.

**Firearms**

Too often, firearms prohibitions are inconsistently ordered and enforced, or there are questions about the respondent’s transfer of firearms. A one-page *Firearms Affidavit*, filled out by the respondent, informs the court of any firearms held by the respondent and if they have been transferred to a third party. If the respondent did transfer the weapons to a third party, that person’s name and contact information is required and he or she is required to fill out a *Third Party Firearms Affidavit*. *Instructions* for the court to use on how and when to use this form provide more important details.

If the respondent tells the court he has sold his firearms, the court then can get an *Affidavit of Purchase of Firearm* so that the court will have the name and details regarding that purchaser. Further, that affidavit, when filled out by the purchaser puts the purchaser on notice that the respondent cannot legally possess that firearm so long as the injunction is in effect. *Instructions* for its use outline when and
how the court should use this form. This is a very useful form to help promote victim safety as the respondent is reminded (at the return hearing or during a status hearing) that possession of firearms is illegal.

_Batterer Intervention Program_

The court, on its own motion (after it gets an attendance report from a local BIP), also has a form to bring in the respondent. The _Order to Show Cause (civil)_ is a direct way to show the respondent that the court is closely monitoring his compliance with the court’s orders.

_Modifications as Evidence of Safety is Produced_

Compliance with BIP and other obligations may result in modifications of the terms of the Injunction. As an example, if there are children and only supervised visits are permitted, the court may schedule and notice the parties in the _Order to Appear_ that at the next compliance hearing the terms of visitation may be reviewed. As the compliance increases and the safety increases, both parties are on notice of the opportunity to be heard as to the safety issues of the children and petitioner at the next hearing. See the _Notice on Motions_ and _Order on Motions._

_For More Information_

- The 6th Circuit forms mentioned in this article are available for download at the ALSO STAAR Project web site. [www.also-chicago.org](http://www.also-chicago.org).
- Email for Judge Lynn Tepper: ltepper@jud6.org.

_ILLINOIS_

_Judiciary-Based Family Violence Coordinating Councils_

Background

The Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Councils originated with the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Illinois in 1993 and operated under the auspices of the Administrative Office of the Court until 2000, when it was transferred to the Illinois Violence Prevention Authority. IFVCC operates mainly with funds from an annual state appropriation. Each of the councils receives $19,500 each year, which supports a part-time coordinator and some of the expenses of the council.

**Key Features**

Illinois has twenty-eight local family violence coordinating councils in twenty-two judicial circuits, covering 102 counties. The statewide Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Council (IFVCC), a component of the Illinois Violence Prevention Authority (IVPA), provides leadership at the state level to the local coordinating councils, and takes on statewide projects that address systems improvements through collaboration with partners, provision of education and training, and the development and dissemination of interagency protocols. The statewide Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Council receives an appropriation from the Illinois General Assembly via IVPA.

IFVCC is led by Director and Steering Committee Co-Chair Vernie Bruehler, and Co-Chair Judge Gene Schwarm. IFVCC bases all of its activities on its guiding principles, which are to:

- Address child abuse, domestic abuse, and elder abuse.
- Include agencies providing services for both victims and perpetrators to ensure a balanced, comprehensive response.
- Promote a coordinated community response through service integration, problem solving, relationship building, and protocol development.
- Provide a forum and act as catalyst for relationship building that in turn leads to systems change.
- Provide a process that allows the council to evolve as experience is gained.
- Recognize that judicial leadership is paramount to the effectiveness of the councils.

3 Cook County has family violence coordinating councils in each of its judicial municipal districts.

4 IFVCC History, located at [www.ifvcc.org/history/](http://www.ifvcc.org/history/).
The guiding principles of the local councils are to:

- Determine direction based on the local needs of communities, available resources, and input from the state level council.
- Provide training to ensure that critical services, the criminal justice system, and court officials are involved.

IFVCC produces and offers resources to local councils. For example, in 2000 it developed a schools-focused publication entitled *Schools Respond to Family Violence: A Guidebook for Educators*, and has also produced *Protocol for Law Enforcement: Responding to Victims of Elder Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation*, in partnership with the Illinois Department on Aging and Illinois TRIAD. [www.ifvcc.org/respondingtoelder/Elder%20Abuse%20Law%20Enforcement%20Protocol%20as%20of%202009.pdf](http://www.ifvcc.org/respondingtoelder/Elder%20Abuse%20Law%20Enforcement%20Protocol%20as%20of%202009.pdf)

As part of its Court Systems Project, IFVCC has produced a Domestic Violence Court System Self-Assessment (available at [www.ifvcc.org/domesticviolence/SelfAssessment.pdf](http://www.ifvcc.org/domesticviolence/SelfAssessment.pdf)), which was used in a project to learn about and domestic violence courts in Illinois. For more information about the Courts Project, go to [www.ifvcc.org/domesticviolence/](http://www.ifvcc.org/domesticviolence/).

IFVCC has also received an OVW FY 2011 Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies and Enforcement of Protection Orders Program award to adopt and implement protocols for law enforcement, prosecutors, the judiciary, and victim services on domestic violence, elder abuse, and abuse perpetrated against women with disabilities. IFVCC Director Vernie Bruehler says that the ability to work on this statewide effort is “a direct result of the statewide collaborative work that has been done over the years, and because of that we have an opportunity to make an even larger impact on family violence across the state.” IFVCC will convene train the trainer sessions on the protocols, and the twenty-three local councils will develop implementation plans and provide local training and follow-up technical assistance within their jurisdictions.

Each local coordinating council is chaired by the chief judge of the judicial circuit, and began with a two-day symposium hosted by the chief judge. The symposia typically included several hundred participants representing numerous disciplines. Membership is multidisciplinary and includes attorneys, prosecutors, law enforcement, victim services, probation, clerks of court, community-based advocates, healthcare professionals, social services, coroners, animal control, clergy, schools, local businesses, housing agencies, and others.

Councils are charged with developing programs that improve the court’s ability to provide services to the community and hear family violence-related cases.\(^5\)

Having a judge chair each council allows access to many areas of the criminal justice and civil legal systems, and also underscores the commitment of the community— including those in positions to make decisions affecting survivors and perpetrators— to address and treat family violence as a serious matter.

Decision-making about projects that local councils engage in, and about the overall direction of the IFVCCs are based on emerging trends and research by state staff, input from the IFVCC steering committee, and the experiences and questions of the local councils. The committees formed by a local council are based upon the needs of the jurisdiction that it covers. For example, in the 4\(^{th}\) Judicial Circuit council, which includes nine counties, is chaired by Judge Gene Schwarm and supports active Law Enforcement and Helping Services committees. Members of the committees bring areas of concern to meetings and decide upon circuit-wide training topics. In 2008, the council received an OVW Rural Grant to Address Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking. During the grant period, coordinated community response training teams were formed, which resulted in enhanced interaction between departments and agencies, and improved investigation and prosecution of family violence cases. The 17\(^{th}\) Judicial Circuit council, which covers Boone and Winnebago Counties and is chaired by Judge Rosemary Collins, utilizes three main committees: Court Procedures, which addresses the workings of the criminal justice system and how to

5 Id.
improve it; Child and Youth Safety, which looks at bullying and other issues that affect the safety of children; and Elder Abuse. The Court Procedures Committee works primarily as a problem-solving committee that tackles broad issues, as well as day-to-day challenges, as they arise. The Child and Youth Safety Committee is a small committee made up of eight individuals, and works towards very specific goals including developing Child Abuse Awareness Month events, and Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month activities in February. The committee is also currently working on the first stages of a project that will address bullying and offer practical tools to help teachers respond.

For More Information
www.ifvcc.org

NEW YORK

Brooklyn Domestic Violence Court Systems

Kings County, New York

Domestic violence cases in Brooklyn are processed as either misdemeanors or felonies. There are three main ways that a case may move through the court system. Misdemeanors are handled by the Integrated Domestic Violence (IDV) Court, which hears cases when families have both criminal and civil domestic violence cases pending, or the Misdemeanor Domestic Violence Court. Felony crimes are heard by the Felony Domestic Violence Court. The descriptions below focus on the IDV and the Felony DV Courts.

Felony DV Court

Background

The Brooklyn Felony Domestic Violence Court is considered to be the first felony DV court in the nation. At the time of its launch in 1996, there were only a small handful of specialized domestic violence courts operating in the U.S. The Court was developed to be a problem-solving court, similar in a number of features to the already-established Brooklyn Drug Court, but was not intended to operate as a treatment court. Rather, it was created for the purpose of addressing domestic violence as a crime and ensuring victim safety while holding offenders accountable. The developers believed that the fundamental tenets of the court must be that in each case, there is a targeted victim, which necessitates specific efforts aimed at keeping victims safe, and that the court must take an active role in holding offenders accountable for their crimes.

Key Features

Victim advocate for every victim - A victim advocate is assigned to each victim in the cases that the court has jurisdiction over. The victim advocates are either based in the Victim Services Unit of the Brooklyn District Attorney’s Office, or from the community-based victim services organization Safe Horizon. In addition to helping victims with needs that are both related to and unrelated to the criminal case, advocates assist the victim with safety planning, securing benefits, housing, employment, counseling, and other life needs.

Intensive monitoring by court – Judge Matthew D’Emic, Presiding Judge of the Felony Domestic Violence Court, believes that monitoring is critical both pre- and post-case disposition, is essential to keeping victims safe, sends the message to defendants that the court is watching, emphasizes the seriousness with which the court views the case, and helps to ensure defendant compliance with orders. Pretrial defendants must also report to court on a regular basis, which reinforces the authority of the court. This means that defendants appear before the court more frequently than the typical 3-4 pretrial appearances and the trial for the general population of defendants. Post-sentencing, probationers must report to probation twice weekly and submit to random drug testing and visits, as well as appear in court every 4-6 weeks with a report from the Department of Probation that the probationer is in compliance.

Resource Coordinator plays an active role in court
monitoring – The Resource Coordinator for the Felony DV Court collects and maintains compliance information about defendants on an ongoing basis – including from programs that the defendant is mandated to attend, victim advocates (with consent of the victim), and the District Attorney’s office. The information is supplied to the judge for monitoring purposes.

This court does not order defendants into batterer intervention programs (BIP). Judge D’Emic and court staff believe strongly that the key to defendant compliance pre- and post-disposition is court monitoring, and they have not found BIPs to be any more effective than court involvement in reducing violations of orders or recidivism. Judge D’Emic also believes that ordering defendants into BIPs pre-disposition may present a due process problem in that such an order would mandate a defendant to participate in a program for offenders before all Constitutional due process requirements have been met, and prior to a guilty verdict or plea.

Integrated Domestic Violence (IDV) Court

Background

In New York, orders of protection can either be issued by a criminal or a civil court and, like most states, criminal and civil domestic violence cases can proceed simultaneously. Prior to the creation of the IDV Court, when there were both a criminal case against a defendant and he or she was also a party to a civil case involving DV in family court, there was a possibility that orders of protection could be in conflict or contradict each other. For example, an order of protection entered by the criminal court judge might prohibit the defendant from contacting the petitioner for any reason, but an order entered by the family court judge might allow for contact to arrange for visitation of the children by the respondent. Additionally, the lawyers representing the parties in a civil case may have been unaware of a pending criminal DV case, and service providers may have offered duplicative or overlapping services if they did not know about the other case. The IDV Court was developed to address these concerns.

Key Features

One judge, one family – The judge who presides over a criminal domestic violence case also hears civil cases involving the same parties including civil protection orders, divorce, custody, and visitation. Criminal and civil cases are not merged, but are coordinated to ensure that the judge presiding over both the criminal and civil cases is fully informed. The cases are kept separate, and the existing different evidentiary rules and burdens of proof apply to each.

Flagging of DV cases for transfer to IDV Court – The court developed a technology program that interfaces with the existing criminal and civil court computerized systems so that if a defendant was arrested for a domestic violence offense, family court cases involving the defendant in family court would be flagged. Depending on the status and progress of an existing case, both cases can then be transferred to the IDV Court so that both cases can be heard by the same judge.

Immediate access to victim advocacy and other services – Advocacy for assistance with the civil and/or criminal cases is made available to every victim. Victims are also provided with assistance and referrals for other needs related to safety planning, housing, finances, and, and other life circumstances.

WEST VIRGINIA

Key Features

West Virginia’s STOP Grant Program helps to fund several domestic violence-focused initiatives within the court system. Here are some of the highlights:

Pilot Domestic Violence Court in Kanawha County

The Kanawha County court system handles over fifty percent of the domestic violence cases in West Virginia. The need to coordinate cases, comprehensively monitor domestic violence offenders, ensure consistency in case hearings and outcomes, and coordinate services for victims are among the goals for this court. This specialized
court began work in 2012 and has brought together magistrate and family court domestic violence cases, streamlined the issuance and appeals of protective orders, and coordinated cases across the board. Some criminal matters are also heard in this court. Similar to other coordinated courts, this one focuses all domestic violence cases with targeted docketing of cases, comprehensive training for judges and staff, and other management improvements.

Training for Judges and Others

The passage of new laws regarding firearms restrictions as well as the need to improve coordination among the courts, law enforcement, prosecutors, and advocates prompted the courts to begin a series of training initiatives on firearms. One result has been for local STOP teams to attend one of four firearms summits and develop and submit protocols on how they can improve their work on domestic violence-related firearm laws. Those local protocols, in turn, led to each of the teams working together to craft a State protocol at a statewide summit. Additional training and troubleshooting on the topic of firearms is ongoing.

Other training efforts include the West Virginia Court System Domestic Violence Training Program under which the Domestic Violence Bench Book and the Domestic Violence Protective Orders Brochure (in English and Spanish) were created.

Domestic Violence Protective Order Registry

The West Virginia Domestic Violence Registry and Database submits protective order data in real time to the National Crime Information Center (NCIC). Moreover, according to its web site, the West Virginia reporting system is one of the fastest in the nation and all law enforcement nationwide have access to it.6 There is also a State database that allows immediate confirmation on the validity of the protective order at all times. To implement the registry, the Court gathers protective order information from all 55 magistrate courts into a central server in the Administrative Office of the Courts and submits that data to NCIC. Court staff scans protection order information into this database with minutes of the order being issued whether during or after working hours. State Police officers statewide and all but two regional 911 centers can access the database 24/7, allowing them to confirm NCIC hits. Small rural police departments that may not have NCIC access can obtain assistance through the State Police. Without the strong collaboration between the courts and law enforcement, this database and registry would not exist.

Geomapping Application

The Administrative Office of the Courts is piloting a mapping application that embeds links to local maps and then links those with the protection order registry. These maps then can give officers directions to an address (like regular GPS), show where there might be other protection orders in effect, and show where orders may have been issued but not served. Firearms data are also linked as are warrants pending service. This kind of service is particularly helpful in rural areas where long drive times on service calls are the norm. With this geomapping application, law enforcement can have more information on hand to act safely and more quickly and efficiently serve orders and warrants.

For More Information


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Check Box

Please check to make sure that you have received the following announcements via email.

ALSO STAAR Project TA

▶ Administrators’ Corner Newsletter, 8/16/2012
▶ “Do You Know Lacy?” a Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking Training, 8/22/2012
▶ Meeting Invitation: STOP Administrators Planning Webinar, 9/14/2012
▶ Meeting Invitation: STOP Administrators Planning Webinar II, 9/14/2012
▶ Meeting Invitation: STOP Administrators Planning Webinar II, 9/14/2012
▶ Meeting Update: STOP Administrators Planning Webinar, 9/17/2012
▶ Meeting Update: STOP Administrators Planning Webinar II, 9/17/2012
▶ NDAA FW: Domestic Violence Conference: Canceled, 9/24/2012

Michelle Brickley

▶ Domestic Violence Homicide Prevention Demonstration Initiative, 9/14/2012

Addressing Court Needs on a Small Budget

The Center for Court Innovation (CCI) is the comprehensive technical assistance provider to the OVW Courts Program, and can also offer information to STOP administrators and subgrantees about utilizing STOP funds for domestic violence court improvements. CCI offers several ideas for ways to implement change within courts without a large grant:

▶ Begin judicial monitoring of offenders. Even courts that do not have a dedicated resource coordinator can do this by providing training to court clerks who can then assist judges with compliance monitoring.
▶ Reorganize cases and judicial calendars so that the court can create a ½-day for DV court, or a whole day, depending on case volume. Work with local DV agencies and legal stakeholders to do this (e.g., move all cases to Monday afternoon) to allow them to devote staff to the courthouse on the agreed-upon day; this allows for more consistent courthouse services to clients.
▶ Know the programs that are in the community from which defendants are receiving services and begin regular communications to monitor defendant progress.
▶ Include resource coordinators and other court staff in trainings supported with 5% STOP Courts allocation so that they receive ongoing DV training.
▶ Hold regular stakeholder meetings that include judges. Include a wide range of stakeholders including the defense bar and others at the table to discuss ongoing practice and protocols, and other items that they can work on as a group. Hold brown bag lunch trainings for the group that utilize local trainers.
▶ Link with existing community services including Family Justice Centers.

CCI has a number of documents on its web site that address DV court systems including:

▶ Spotlight on Victim Safety [link]
▶ New York Commemorates 10 Years of Domestic Violence Courts [link]
▶ Key Principles of Domestic Violence Court: Coordinated Community Response [link]
▶ Key Principles of Domestic Violence Court: Accountability [link]

For more information, contact Robyn Mazur at rmazur@courts.state.ny.us or Liberty Aldrich at aldrichl@courtinnovation.org.
STOP Program-Funded Court-Related Activities

The following data provided by the Muskie School are taken from 2010 STOP Subgrantee Reports and represent work addressing court responses to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking in the states and territories.

- Training was provided by 194 STOP subgrantees (one-fifth of all subgrantees funding training activities) to a total of 9,275 court personnel.
- Subgrantees reported providing training on criminal court procedures (437 subgrantees), civil court procedures (302), and judicial response (244).
- 6,705 new misdemeanor domestic violence and 543 new felony domestic violence cases were filed in STOP-funded courts. These represented 80% of all new cases filed (9,031) during 2010.
- A total of 9,201 domestic violence protection orders (temporary and final) were granted in STOP-funded courts.
- 50 STOP-funded specialized units in courts addressed DV.

Several STOP subgrantees and administrators described the policies and procedures, strategies, and products they have developed in and for their STOP Program-funded courts to enhance offender accountability and ensure victim safety:

- Protocols and policies are routinely updated and modified to accommodate the constant evolution of the DV Court. Various protocols are followed by volunteer victim advocates, court staff, judges and volunteer attorneys. As a result victims experience a more safe, service-oriented court environment and offenders are held accountable for their actions. Examples of protocols include (but are not limited to): (1) Timed exits for respondents, allowing petitioners adequate time to exit the courthouse and leave the premises; (2) Separation of petitioners and respondents in the seating area of the courtroom; (3) Quicker and more frequent compliance hearings for respondents ordered into a batterer intervention program; and (4) Victim advocates meeting with petitioners in a safe location, providing them with the option of receiving follow-up contact and utilizing court security if the petitioner feels unsafe exiting the building alone.

In addition, a contempt process was developed and implemented (as of January 2010), allowing the court to hold respondents in contempt of court for violating certain conditions of the Orders of Protection. Further, the contempt process allows the imposition of consequences - such as jail time, community service, or other alternative sentencing options - for repeated violation of and/or failure to comply with the conditions set forth in the Order of Protection. ...There was a significant increase in the number of victims served by the DV Court during this reporting period due to an increase in the number of volunteer advocates. This increase in the number of volunteers is attributed to the efforts of the part-time Volunteer Specialist that was hired in March 2010.

-- Specialized Civil Domestic Violence Court (St. Louis County) (MO)

The Office of Court Administration’s (OCA) Coordination of Court Resources for Domestic Violence Issues in Texas funds a full-time single point-of-contact domestic violence resource attorney (DVRA). The DVRA compiled, in partnership with the Texas Council on Family Violence, the first-ever domestic violence benchbook for the Texas judiciary. This benchbook provides the Texas judiciary with a single, comprehensive reference for family violence law. The benchbook is available through OCA's website at http://www.courts.state.tx.us/oca/DVRA/dvra-home.asp.

-- Texas STOP Administrator
[Funding] has allowed us to hire outside consultants to translate the PA Final Protection from Abuse Order and related additional documents used by victims of domestic violence seeking protection from courts throughout the state. By standardizing and translating these forms and materials into some of the most common languages found in our court system we are better able to assist victims of domestic violence from minority communities who would otherwise find it challenging to access court services and information in this vital area. These translated documents will empower victims from minority communities to seek the relief they are entitled to and assert their full rights to protection under the domestic violence law.

-- Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts

During the past two years, the Alaska Court System has used grant funds to develop a comprehensive training program to prepare language interpreters for interpreting in complex court hearings. Before STOP began providing funds for access to qualified interpreters, few petitioners brought interpreters to protective order proceedings, and almost none brought qualified interpreters. Petitioners often brought bilingual friends or even witnesses to interpret for them. The use of unskilled interpreters sometimes resulted in miscommunications with the judicial officers. STOP funds provide qualified interpreters to assist with long-term protective order proceedings and ensure access to the justice system for those whose first language is not English.

-- Alaska STOP Administrator

The dv court project has seen exponential growth and evolution over the past four years and has had a synergistic impact on the community as community agencies develop or expand protocols and collaborative relationships to bring solutions to domestic violence in Pima County. For instance, four years ago, a Fatality Review Board was just a vision. The DV Court Project, through STOP grant funding contributed to advancing Pima County’s criminal justice system and victim advocacy groups to this point.

-- Pima County Consolidated Justice Court (PCCJC)
DV Court Project (Arizona)

STOP Program funds were used to maintain a satellite domestic violence intake center in an underserved section of the District of Columbia so domestic violence victims could receive services in their community. Temporary protection orders were processed by teleconferencing from the satellite location to the courthouse. In addition to receiving assistance with filing petitions, a number of services were offered. Domestic violence victims received safety planning, emergency referrals to community social service programs and shelters, and legal referrals.

-- District of Columbia Courts

Prior to receiving this funding, the Court did not monitor any compliance with any provisions of the Protection Orders unless the victim filed a motion with the Court alleging non-compliance. Now, we are able to monitor every Respondent who was ordered for an evaluation by a Domestic Violence Coordinating Council certified agency without relying on the victim.

-- The Family Court of the State of Delaware

Stop Grant funding has allowed us to have a specialized domestic violence injunction court that ensures better security for victims, immediate service of orders for protection at court, assistance and referral services, monitoring of court ordered treatment, coordination of cases with criminal cases, and regular assessment and review of practices and procedures.

-- Santa Rosa County Board of County Commissioners (FL)
In 2008 Florida developed a partnership with New Mexico to purchase the patented rights to a model on-line virtual court training series. We are extremely excited about this innovative training model that will bring state of the art education to Judges, instead of Judges having to re-arrange their schedules and travel to attend training. The program has been designed to meet Florida standards and became operational in 2009/2010.

Another specialized project entails court injunction services located in a rural under-served geographic area of northern Florida. The project incorporates policies, procedures and protocols for coordinating, integrating and systematizing the dedicated operations of all the stakeholders into a unified, holistic approach to domestic violence injunction cases; one that is victim safety driven, rather than system driven. The essential components of this system that are supported by STOP funds are a Specialized Prosecutor in the State Attorney’s Office and a Specialized Domestic Violence Injunction Court comprised of a Case Coordinator and a Student Assistant.

-- Florida STOP Administrator

We Welcome Your Input!
Please send comments and questions, as well as suggestions for topics, to Mary Seighman at mseighman@also-chicago.org.

VAWA MEI update
The follow are updates from the Muskie School for STOP Administrators and Subgrantees.

Subgrantee Reporting Form
There is a version of the subgrantee reporting form with a new expiration date available on our website if you wish to direct subgrantees to it:

http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/vawamei/stopformulaform.htm

While there have been no other changes to the form itself, and using the older form is perfectly acceptable, sometimes subgrantees are concerned that they are not using the right form when they see the old expiration date.

STOP Subgrantee Online Self-Paced Tutorial
Remember to direct your subgrantees to our new self-paced tutorial on collecting and reporting data for the STOP annual progress reporting form. This resource uses voice, PowerPoint slides, and text, including numerous examples and polling questions, and addresses all sections and questions on the form. Users can navigate within the tutorial and can choose which sections to study.

http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/vawamei/stopformulatrain.htm#online

Users go through a very simple, one-time only registration process to access the training.
In June 2012, the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) surveyed state court administrators to determine how Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) STOP funds are allocated and used by courts. The survey also served as a follow-up to assess the impact of the National Leadership Summit on State Court Responses to Domestic Violence held in 2010. Under the STOP block grant program, each state and territory must allocate at least five percent of the state STOP monies to court-based programs or initiatives. This report is based on survey responses from state court administrators from 43 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Four key findings are highlighted below.

1. Nine out of ten states report having a domestic violence point of contact at the administrative office of the courts (AOC).

2. About half of the responding AOCs reported receiving the five percent set-aside for the courts.

While nearly all states and territories have a designated point of contact, only twenty-four of the forty-five respondents (53%) verified that the courts are receiving the five percent set-aside. This proportion is lower than in previous years, when 63 percent and 65 percent of state courts reported receiving the set-aside. The reduction could be related to the relatively large proportion of state AOC’s (29%) that do not have a defined role in the STOP grant distribution process.

3. Summit attendees reported increased coordination with their STOP administering agencies, as well as other benefits of the Summit.

Thirty-one responding states sent representatives to the Summit in 2010. Nearly all of these states reported that the Summit had made a difference in some way. The most commonly cited benefits of the Summit include improved communication between the STOP grant administering agency and the AOC point of contact, valuable networking with other state POCs, improved understanding of how STOP funds can be used, and development of a strategic plan for moving forward. All ten states that reported improved coordination with their administering agency in the past two years had attended the Summit.

4. Judicial and court staff training are the most common usage of STOP funds and the areas in greatest need of technical assistance.

STOP funds were used for training for judges and judicial officials in 73 percent of responding states. The vast majority of respondents (40 of 45; 89%) indicated that they have a designated point person in the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) on family violence issues. This is a substantial increase from reports in similar surveys conducted in 2003 and 2008 when 70 percent and 71 percent of responding states, respectively, had a point of contact. Seven respondents reported that their point of contact at the AOC was an outgrowth of the National Leadership Summit.
Other common uses of STOP funds included training for court staff, developing judicial resource guides, and supporting problem-solving courts or dockets. The greatest needs in the area of technical assistance were in training for judges and judicial officials, training for court staff, supporting programs for offenders, understanding the requirements for using STOP funds, and learning about other states’ best practices.

States with AOC DV Points of Contact. States with no shading did not respond to the survey.

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Research on Court Approaches to Domestic Violence

Edna Erez, et al., GPS Monitoring Technologies and Domestic Violence: An Evaluation Study (June 2012).
www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/238910.pdf

This study looked at the use of GPS monitoring for the enforcement of domestic violence no contact orders and its effectiveness as a form of pretrial supervision. The researchers found that there has been a gradual increase in use of GPS for domestic violence cases since 1996 for the purpose of increasing victim safety and monitoring offenders, and that GPS does have an impact on offenders in the short- and long-term. Moreover, based on interviews with stakeholders, victims felt that pretrial GPS use provided relief from abuse that they were subjected to before GPS. The authors cite policy implications including the need for justice professionals to cultivate relationships with victims whose abusers are being monitored with GPS and the importance of “maintaining an appropriate balance between victim safety and due process for the defendant.”

Melissa Labriola et al., A National Portrait of Domestic Violence Courts (Center for Court Innovation, 2009).
www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/229659.pdf

Using an approach that involved creating a compendium of domestic violence courts around the U.S., conducting site visits, and conducting national surveys and phone interviews, the authors examined how criminal domestic violence courts have evolved, their rationales, and how they vary across the country. Findings include common goals of promoting victim safety and offender accountability, but also significant differences in the ways that courts go about their work. The report offers a description of the field at the time the data were collected.

www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/216041.pdf

From the report: “This report discusses how pretrial innovations were implemented in the three demonstration sites — Dorchester, MA, Milwaukee, WI, and Washtenaw County, MI. It also describes the pretrial strategies, key aspects of their implementation, and lessons learned for other jurisdictions wishing to implement innovations in pretrial procedures for domestic violence cases. Major changes in the operations of the courts at the pretrial stage entailed:

▶ Developing consistent and timely procedures for judges to use in handling pretrial matters in domestic violence cases.
▶ Restructuring court processes to focus on the unique characteristics of domestic violence cases.
▶ Monitoring defendants prior to trial and responding to violations of bond conditions.
▶ Connecting victims to support services early in the process.
LINK Summer Conference Series — The STAAR Project’s LINK (Locally Implementing National Knowledge) Program offers opportunities to STOP subgrantees to attend OVW-approved or –sponsored events by supporting the travel costs and conference registration fees associated with participation in conferences and trainings.

During the Summer of 2012, LINK supported the participation of 30 individuals in three different events – the Women of Color Network 2012 National Call to Action Institute and Conference, held July 9-13 in Minneapolis; Domestic Violence and the Black Community: Unpacking the Significance of Our Diversity – Examining Culture, Class, Social Class, and Ethnicity for Effective Research and Service Delivery (Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community, held August 13-15 in Norfolk, Virginia; and 2012 National Sexual Assault Conference: Revive, Rethink, Reclaim, held August 22-24 in Chicago.

LINK participants were provided with reimbursement for the cost of attending and traveling to one of the events. They participated in pre-conference webinars to discuss what they are hoping to learn and apply to their work, on-site networking opportunities with one another, and a post-event webinar to present an action plan for application of knowledge acquired at the conference that they attended.

Action plans were created by LINK participants in all three conferences. Action plan synopses will be published in the next issue of Administrators’ Corner.

LINK Participants in the Women of Color conference were:
- Lourdes Centurion, Catholic Charities, Portland, Oregon
- Barbara Hunter, Colorado River Regional Crisis Shelter, Parker, Arizona
- Greg Kedzior, Chicago Police Department, Chicago, Illinois
- Jessica Li, Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project, Washington, DC
- Kathleen Marvin, Tillamook County Women’s Resource Center, Tillamook, Oregon
- Orenda Poindexter, Wilmington, Delaware
- Dimple A. Smith, Pima County Attorney’s Office, Tucson, Arizona
- Amara Tek, Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project, Washington, DC

LINK participants in the IDVAAC conference were:
- Lisa Ambrose, Seeds of Hope, Waterloo, Iowa
- Kelley Beckett, The Buckeye Ranch Visitation and Exchange Program, Columbus, Ohio
- Clytia Charles, YWCA of Delaware, Wilmington, Delaware
- Ebony M. Dill, Chicago Department of Family and Support Services, Chicago, Illinois
- Laura French, Victim Assistance Program, Williamsburg, Virginia
- Taneshia Hannon, Safeplace, Inc., Florence, Alabama
- Rosie Loggins, Seeds of Hope, Waterloo, Iowa
- Malynda Reed, City of Massillon Law Department, Massilon, Ohio
- Samantha Strader, YWCA of Middle Tennessee and Nashville, Tennessee
LINK participants in the National Sexual Assault Conference were:

- Eleana Butler, Sexual Assault Services of Northern New Mexico, Farmington, New Mexico
- Karen Cope, Crisis Center for Domestic Abuse/Sexual Assault, Fremont, Nebraska
- Ghia Delapena, Guma’ Mami, Inc., Hagatna, Guam
- Tonya Folk, Community Domestic Violence Intervention Program, North Platt, Nebraska
- Pam Gremmels, Illinois Department of Corrections, Monticello, Illinois
- Gwyn Kaitis, Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women’s Network, Chicago, Illinois
- Anita Panko, Montpelier Police Department Victims Assistance Unit, Montpelier, Idaho
- Adriana Rios, Guam Police Department Victim’s Assistant Unit, Tiyan, Guam
- Lara Saffo, Office of the Grafton County Attorney, North Haverhill, New Hampshire
- Jolene Schmitz, Safe Harbor, Ronan, Montana
- Gerald Waltemeyer, York County District Attorney’s Office, Pennsylvania
- Larissa Warren, Polk County House of Hope, Bolivar, Missouri

Inclusion of State Documents in Administrator Handbook – the STAAR Project has contacted all STOP administrators who supplied documents to support the development of the STOP Administrator Handbook if the document is slotted to be included in the appendices of the Handbook. If you received an email and have responded already, thank you! The Handbook is currently being reviewed by OVW.

2013 STOP Administrator Meeting – Planning has begun for the 2013 annual meeting for STOP administrators. Two planning webinars were held on September 17 for administrators to provide input into the content and structure of the agenda. Thank you to all who participated. There will be additional opportunities to participate in planning processes in the coming months.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Serving Survivors with Disabilities and Deaf Survivors: Practical Guidance and Information for Advocates and Others Working to End Sexual and Domestic Violence

Accessing Safety Initiative, part of the Center on Victimization and Safety at the Vera Institute of Justice

This web conference series offers an opportunity to build concrete skills and knowledge relevant to serving survivors with disabilities. Webinars will occur from 3:00-4:30 p.m. Eastern Time. Dates and topics are subject to change. Contact Jennifer Howard (jhoward@vera.org) for more information. To be added to the mailing list to receive future announcements about this web conference series, please provide your contact information at [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/M8TFLPN](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/M8TFLPN).

- Creating Access for People with Intellectual Disabilities at Rape Crisis Centers - November 13, 2012
- Partnering with Deaf Anti-Violence Providers – January 15, 2013
- Supporting Survivors with Disabilities Through the Criminal Justice System – February 12, 2013
- Effective Outreach to People with Disabilities – March 12, 2013

For more information about the Accessing Safety Initiative, go to [http://www.accessingsafety.org](http://www.accessingsafety.org).
Responding to Domestic Violence in the African American Community: Increasing Pathways to Safety & Justice, Minimizing Disparity

November 13-15, 2012, Savannah, Georgia
Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community

The “one-size-fits-all” approach to domestic violence interventions and services being provided in mainstream communities does not suffice for many victims and their families. African American families disproportionately experience stressors and unique cultural conditions that can contribute to intimate partner violence. In order to effectively respond to violence and abuse we must address the needs of individuals through a culturally responsive lens.

This conference is intended for law enforcement, prosecutors, probation, judges, advocates, and other CCR partners. Faculty will include domestic violence and social justice researchers, criminal justice practitioners, advocates, and experts from fields that intersect with intimate partner violence, such as prison re-entry programs, sexual assault, adolescent dating violence, and gangs.

For more information, contact Jeanne Larson at (612) 824-8768 x101 or jlarson@bwjp.org, or go to http://conferences.bwjp.org/conferencedetail.aspx?confid=64.

Assessing Patterns of Coercive Control in Abusive Relationships, Part 3: Practice and Program Implementation (pending approval) (Webinar)

November 13, 2012, 9:30 a.m. PT
Northwest Network of Bisexual, Trans, Lesbian & Gay Survivors of Abuse

This is part 3 in a 3-part series on “Assessing Patterns of Coercive Control in Abusive Relationships.” This session continues to offer opportunities to engage in skill building and practice with the Northwest Network’s assessment tool. Using real-life examples, role-play observation and hands-on exercises, participants will deepen their understanding and build capacity to conduct assessments. This session will also address the myriad considerations for implementation, including documentation, intake policy best practices and organizational considerations relevant for programs who are interested in increasing their competency in serving LGBTQ survivors and integrating a broader practice of assessment into their service delivery. To register, go to http://bwjp.ilinc.com/register/rfijcfm.

For more information, contact Kristin Tucker at kristin@nwnetwork.org, or go to http://nwnetwork.org/news-and-events/.

Effective Facilitation Skills Workshop

November 15-16, 2012, Washington, DC
Futures Without Violence

The workshop learning objectives are to:

▶ Identify the purposes and uses of facilitation in specific types of meetings.
▶ Use specific facilitation techniques to make meetings more productive and engaging.
▶ Conduct appropriate meeting preparation, including creation of an agenda
▶ Manage group dynamics and address facilitation challenges.

Attendance is limited to 30 participants representing OVW grantees, including advocates, attorney-advocates, batterers intervention specialists, prosecutors, law enforcement, judges, and other professionals. Grantees are strongly encouraged to participate in teams of 2 or 3 persons to obtain the maximum benefit of the program. The workshop is provided free of charge. Participants are responsible for their own lodging, travel arrangements, and costs associated with attending the program. Financial assistance for some travel expenses may be available to a limited number of participants with special funding needs. For more information, contact Keiko Takano at ktakano@futureswithoutviolence.org, or go to http://www.futureswithoutviolence.org.
911 through Charging Decisions: Planning and Conducting a Best-Practice Assessment of Institutional Responses to DV

November 28-29, 2012, Phoenix, Arizona
Praxis International, Inc.

Rural communities funded to collaborate with criminal justice system practitioners face a dearth of effective strategies to meaningfully engage their partners to create change to improve outcomes in cases of battering. Praxis has developed the Domestic Violence Best-Practice Assessment Tools for inter-agency teams and partners responding to domestic violence crimes to evaluate and inform intervention in the areas of 911 emergency communications, patrol response, investigations, and prosecution charging decisions. This roundtable will bring together interdisciplinary teams to engage in interactive, how-to activities to practice using the best-practice assessment templates and tools with actual case files, records, and policies. Participants will sharpen their skills and confidence in putting these tools to work in their communities. Contact Janice Wick for more information at ruralta@praxisinternational.org or 218-525-0487, x251, or go to http://praxisinternational.org/praxis_events.aspx.

Enhancing Judicial Skills in Domestic Violence Cases Workshop

December 2-5, 2012, Santa Fe, New Mexico
National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

The three-day, hands-on, highly interactive workshop provides an essential foundation for new and experienced state court judges to enhance their skills in handling civil and criminal domestic violence cases. For more information, contact Jenniifer Talancon at JTalancon@ncjfcj.org or go to http://NJIDV.org.

Advocacy Strategies: Strengthening Safety & Support Planning with LGBTQ Survivors of Abuse (pending approval) (Webinar)

December 4, 2012, 12:00-1:30 p.m. PT
Northwest Network of Bisexual, Trans, Lesbian & Gay Survivors of Abuse

How do current and historic experiences of oppression impact how LGBTQ survivors navigate the systems so often engaged by survivors of violence? How can we support survivors to decrease isolation, reconnect with friends and community while navigating shared spaces with people who have caused them harm? In what ways can we expand and re-imagine traditional safety planning to include an awareness of the strengths, challenges, assets and vulnerabilities of LGBTQ individuals and communities? Join us for an interactive, practical exploration of culturally responsive advocacy, safety and support planning when working with LGBTQ survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. To register, go to http://bwjp.ilinc.com/register/bkwwkpv. For more information, contact Kristin Tucker at kristin@nwnetwork.org, or go to http://nwnetwork.org/news-and-events/.

Understanding LGBTQ Survivor’s Rights: LGBTQ Family Law (pending approval) (Webinar)

December 11, 2012, 12:00-1:30 p.m. PT
Northwest Network of Bisexual, Trans, Lesbian & Gay Survivors of Abuse

Description: The webinar will assist advocates working with LGBTQ survivors who need assistance related to family law (divorce, dissolution, custody, visitation, etc.). This session will provide basic information about family law issues that impact LGBTQ communities as a whole, as well as the particular impacts for LGBTQ survivors of domestic violence. The information provided will assist advocates in “issue spotting” and advocacy tips in understanding the current legal context for LGBTQ survivors, including the rights they may have as well as the hurdles they might face in accessing family law remedies. To register, go to http://bwjp.ilinc.com/register/cmbbrym. For more information, contact Kristin Tucker at kristin@nwnetwork.org, or go to http://nwnetwork.org/news-and-events/.